

settle on, as though to remind me that in spite of all my energy, actions, manipulations, desires, force, actions, the natural world continues to reform. And in miniature the ashtray plays this game, as do the dirty dishes, the spotty floor, the subtly dank-smelling bath towels. Only flushing the toilet is made easy and definitive, and even that leaves in time yellow stains, rings of a displeasing nature.

Enough. Having woken up I am free to avoid all of this, to refuse to hassle with protons and neutrons and unidentifiable substances that crowd my space. I can soak the pots, or resoak the pots, I can avoid direct confrontation with the shelves and floors, moving in what some South Africans call a "dwall," that sort of slow and listless oblivion of the daydreamer. I can drink my second, third cup of coffee without fear, having another pound bought at this week's price stashed in the cupboard.

I can return to the bed, made now, somewhat haphazardly, sheets still wrinkled but getting flattened under my pressing body, and read the magazines I have acquired one way or another, hating to pay for magazines because they, too, are transient. And yet it is their transience I like, their time-dated quality, their identification of nowness, I like that. So why don't I buy them? I suppose it is because I come from an era when things were bought for their permanence, that same sick obsession that makes some people put plastic covers over the furniture they bought for its fabric!

Rotation and replenishment, dust, dirt, magazines, mornings, days, so much whirling about, so little that is sure and stable. Perhaps that is the comfort of it all, that we too are whirling about, settling down, being wiped off and replaced. Our time on the shelf. It reminds me, it reminds me, and I am caught between despair and comfort.

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## Letters

Editor:

Re: "Supermarket Survival," May 23, 1975. I have purchased from "Nature Food Centers" for approximately 25 years — quality excellent, and they pay the postage.

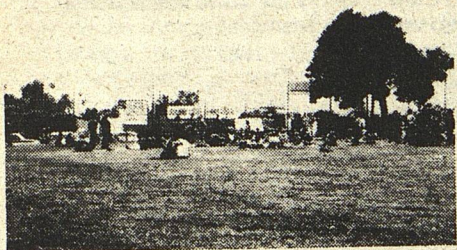
Also an old remedy which beats any commercial product, a 1000 per cent as a mouth wash, and cost is practically nil: 2 parts baking soda and 1 part table salt; 1 tsp. rounded, to a half glass of warm water; very healing to sore mouth, tender gums, etc.

As a tooth powder, use 1 part salt, 4 parts baking soda and approximately 1/2 part Tide detergent; beats any paste or powder.

Don Clark  
Ventura, Calif.

Editor,

Thought the enclosed photographs would be of interest to you. As you can see, the Joan Little rally was poorly attended. Which is puzzling, considering



that the issues involved should be close to women's lib groups. Perhaps a sociologist could shed light on that, and thus make an interesting article for the paper.

Sincerely  
Nadine Etkes  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Editor:

I have long considered Ed Davis a tumor on the metropolitan body politic, but it took a visit to San Diego to make me appreciate how different life in L.A. would be were the tumor excised.

Some friends and I recently drove down to our southern neighbor for a jazz festival at San Diego Stadium. The first set had already begun when we arrived, and a sizable portion of the crowd was already seated. As we waited for an usher to give us directions, the airborne aroma of countless burning marijuana cigarettes teased our nostrils, and we smiled at the realization that we just might get contact highs. But our smiles quickly vanished as we realized where we were — in San Diego, lair of right-wingers, den of conservatives and bastion of the military.

Our preconceived notions of San Diego told us that the combination of the

city and the crowd, which was predominantly black, predominantly young, predominately from L.A., and predominantly tolerant of marijuana-smoking, could only mean droves of uniformed and/or undercover cops. We began to scan the crowd in hopes of spotting them, but our search was in vain. All we saw were the thousands of people who'd come to hear music. So low was the police profile that not until after the concert did we see the cops; surprisingly, they were outside the stadium directing traffic rather than inside hassling people.

Such would not have been the case had the festival taken place under the jurisdiction of Ed Davis and his LAPD. When exactly the same kind of crowd was gathering at the Hollywood Bowl for a similar event earlier this summer, an unarmed young man was shot dead by one of Davis' armed veterans. Controversy still swirls around the shooting, as the *Free Press* is thankfully reporting, but the most salient point is that yet another Davis protege gunned down yet another black person.

Down south in San Diego, the city council gave the nation its first and only legal nude beach; and although some nearby property-owners are disgruntled, a San Diego police lieutenant is quoted as saying, "If it offends you, stay away from it."

Ed Davis might do well to take that advice in reference not so much to beach nudity as to general trends and changes in L.A. Much of what is happening here, he clearly finds offensive: the nascent liberalism of city government; marijuana-smoking that rivals liquor-drinking during Prohibition (guess what the middle class is bringing to those Philharmonic concerts at the Bowl, besides champagne!); advocacy of gun control; activist feminism; and the growing political clout of several minorities, particularly blacks and gays (the effort to allow openly gay men and women to serve on the police force must be especially galling for Davis).

But whereas Ed Davis is offended by such things, a plurality and probably a majority of citizens welcomes what amounts to an emergent new and enlightened society.

Perhaps Ed Davis so loves his adopted city that, despite the social revolution going on here, he wouldn't leave. No matter. All I and a lot of other people want is his resignation as police chief and a concomitant cessation to the inanities he's foisted upon us. He's welcome as a fellow citizen, but not as a citizen who happens to wield power as police chief. L.A. will be a freer city once Ed Davis is retired to private life.

Lonnie Ainsworth  
Los Angeles, Calif.



RALPH NADER

## Proxmire: Working Man

How can government and corporate officials become more sensitive to the anguish, hopes, ideas and strengths of the people?

This is one of the cardinal, age-old questions of justice and democracy, particularly in a society where huge organizations are headed by remote, often inaccessible rulers with more power than they can responsibly use. It is a question that requires many answers.

Senator William Proxmire, D-Wis., thinks he has one answer to make him more aware of what people go through than what he can obtain from statistics or reports. Instead of just circulating through Wisconsin's fairs, stadiums and shopping centers shaking hands with citizens (he does plenty of that), the Senate's leading sprinter (he runs back and forth from work a total of 10 miles every day) is spending an entire day actually working with laborers.

On June 30, 1975, a garbage man made his early morning rounds in Fond Du Lac, Wis., to pick up bundles and boxes of trash. His helper in the heaven-and-ho effort was Sen. Proxmire. "Worked like a trooper," said the driver of his assistant.

The next day, Proxmire spent a day working with production laborers at a GM division in Oak Creek. The next day he spent at the Milwaukee office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The senator is chairperson of the appropriations subcommittee that handles the department's budget.

All this is nothing new for him. In past years, Proxmire has worked for a day as a Salvation Army kitchen helper, a paper maker, construction laborer, cheese maker, pea packer, bank clerk and men's store clerk. Such activities, of course, make for good publicity and give more people the feeling that they can give their senator some suggestions or a piece of their mind. Beyond that, it gives an elected representative an early alert system about what is on people's minds.

While many other members of Congress are off on junkets or vacations, Proxmire is logging hearings on the economy during congressional recesses. Before most legislators, Proxmire sensed how upset people were about waste in government contracts

with business, especially in the defense industry. He is a leader in rooting out government waste.

Working for a day on different jobs also opens up more opportunities for groups to lobby the senator. Whereas for most senators, citizens have to make appointments, Wisconsin residents find themselves trying to entice Proxmire into a day's work — their kind of work.

Presently, consumer cooperatives are trying to entice the senator into appreciating how superior the consumer cooperative form of private property can be over corporate stock type firms. Would the senator be interested in working at Eau Claire, Wis., consumer coop?

The Proxmire principle needs to be adopted in those bloated bureaucracies we call corporations and government agencies where the need is greater than in the Senate. Imagine Henry Ford II spending a day mining coal underground at one of his company's properties. Or Mayor Abraham Beame collecting garbage instead of deficit figures along the streets of New York City.

Or James Schlesinger getting up at 4:30 a.m. for a week in Army basic training. Or Earl Butz, agribusiness booster at the Department of Agriculture, harvesting crops in a California valley with the migrant workers. Or Thomas Murphy, the General Motors boss, joining his employees breathing fumes in an automotive plant for an eight-hour stretch followed by another day or two laboring at an old GM foundry.

Having top executives of large organizations soak up some reality at the street level of their institution or with the consumers of their activities is no panacea. But, as J. Paul Austin of Coca Cola found out when he went down to his company's orange groves, it does take some of the excessive abstraction out of these powerbrokers' insulated experience.

The Proxmire principle needs a regular beat from these people at the top. How about a shareholders' resolution for each company and an executive order for top bureaucrats that has them spend two weeks a year living it up at the bottom of their ladder?

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